



Washington's Mental Health Transformation Project

Partnerships for Recovery & Resiliency

TRANSFORMATION NEWS

FALL 2006

www.MHTransformation.wa.gov

PLAN SUBMITTED TO SAMHSA

On September 28, 2006, the Mental Health Transformation Project, with the approval of Governor Christine Gregoire, submitted the Washington State Mental Health Transformation Plan: Phase One to the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). The plan is available on our web site. The report represents thousands of hours of work by consumers, family members, youth, advocates, and professionals, and reflects the testimony of our states citizens taken during this years planning process.

Now that the plan is complete, work will begin on implementation. Given the sheer scope and depth of the report, the next task is to begin to prioritize and sequence efforts to achieve Washington's transformation goals. As the next fours years unfold, numerous activities that bring the Subcommittee Outcomes into focus, and ultimately result in a Transformed system will take place.

TWG MEETS TO BEGIN IMPLEMENTATION EFFORT

In mid-October, the Transformation Work Group met to begin targeting the 27 Outcomes developed in the first year Transformation Plan. Under the direction of Governor Christine Gregoire, agencies will begin to set specific activities for achieving the goals of the plan.

Some of the goals will require an examination of system structures and supports needed to create change. The Project will provide the technical assistance and support for organizations represented on the TWG that will carry the responsibility of implementation. Coordination between systems and stakeholders will be critical to our success. Consumer involvement remains a key element in assuring that changes reflect the expectations of the plan. The TWG will meet again in January to review and approve the detailed implementation plans presented by the agencies responsible for the prioritized goals. You can view the TWG identified priorities that were forwarded to Governor Gregoire at <http://mhtransformation.wa.gov/MHTG/priorityreport.shtml#yeartwo>.

ADULT CONSUMER CONFERENCE A BIG SUCCESS!

On September 15 in Kennewick, over 200 consumers, supporters and advocates came together to participate in workshops, discuss policy and to create consumer momentum. Workshops ranged from art therapy, nutrition and wellness to advanced directives, employment, and legislative advocacy. Day two focused on the development of "planks", or policy positions about issues important to consumers. The plank approach was modeled after work of the National Self-Help Mental Health Consumer Clearinghouse out of Pennsylvania, which provided facilitation for most of the plank development workshops.

In addition, the first 15 affiliate directors of the new Washington Health Empowerment Network (W.H.E.N) were introduced and had an opportunity to address the audience. The second day key note speaker was Joseph Rodgers, a long-time advocate and head of the National Consumer Clearinghouse. His rousing message of hope and recovery inspired the audience and served as an excellent kickoff to the development of policy strategies during the plank workshops. The conference was supported by SAMHSA through the WA Transformation Grant. View speaker presentation handouts, Plank reports and related materials on our website at:

<http://mhtransformation.wa.gov/mhtg/conference.shtml>

WASHINGTON HEALTH EMPOWERMENT NETWORK

In Kennewick during the Adult Consumer Conference, the new consumer network organization was introduced. The Washington Health Empowerment Network (W.H.E.N) is modeled after the consumer-run California Network of Mental Health Clients, a statewide, county-based advocacy network focusing on mental health issues. The process for recruiting and selecting W.H.E.N. members was intensive and began with MTHP Consumer Liaison staff traveling across the state to meet with various organizations and seeking out consumers in each county to spread the word on the application process. Following the closure of the three-month application process, a selection committee comprised of consumers in the community who were retained via contract with the state, reviewed and scored the applications using a uniform scoring tool. The applicants with the highest scores were forwarded to the MHTP Consumer Liaisons who worked with them during an intensive two-day retreat to team-build and begin visioning and building the group's governing directives.

Conference attendees welcomed the first 15 affiliate directors of the new networks and learned about their passion for organizing and empowering consumers across the state. The current affiliates represent counties and tribes from the better part of the state and form the backbone of the network. Each affiliate will be responsible for bringing other consumers on board as members to advocate for improvements, consumer-run services and policies that honor the voice and views of individuals with mental health problems. Eventually, 45 county and tribal affiliates will comprise the full W.H.E.N. affiliate directors who will act as connectors and community resources in their own counties.

The development of the network is one of the requirements of the Transformation Grant; the network will be supported through its development, and the project will provide grant support directly through contract once the new organization achieves non-profit 501(c)3 status. The tax exempt status will allow the networks to receive grant funds, seek contributions and eventually become self-sustaining.

W.H.E.N has already become a member of the Community Transformation Partnership and some members of W.H.E.N. also sit on the Mental Health Planning and Advisory Council. To view the affiliate members as they've been selected thus far, see Frequently Asked Questions, and read about what the network has been doing lately, please visit <http://www.mhtransformation.wa.gov/MHTG/consumerNetwork.shtml>. We hope you'll also help to spread the word to consumers across the state on how they can get involved in this exciting initiative.

COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION PARTNERSHIP (CTP)

The Community Transformation Partnership (CTP) represents several independent consumer and family organizations that assisted in the preparation of the Washington State Transformation Grant proposal. The group has come together to create an inclusive statewide structure to advance the state's mental health system transformation efforts and has a formal working relationship with the Transformation Project. The CTP serves as a focal point for information dissemination from the Transformation Work Group and project staff to consumer organizations, informal networks, and individual consumers and families.

The CTP collective membership represents well over four hundred individuals concerned with the rights of consumers in the mental health system. Issues surrounding parity, co-occurring disorders, criminal justice, access to care standards and cross-system collaboration help shape the priorities that are driving the CTP's 2007 legislative agenda. On November 16, 2006 the CTP will ratify their by-laws and prioritize their legislative agenda for the 2007 session. The CTP also plans to elect their first co-chairs who will serve for the next year at the November meeting. Inquiries about the CTP can be sent to MHTP staff c/o Stephanie Lane at lanesk@dshs.wa.gov

Thank you for sharing our newsletter with others. Questions or comments?
Contact David Brenna, 360-902-8456 or brenndc@dshs.wa.gov. Visit our web site at <www.MHTransformation.wa.gov> If you'd like to sign up for this newsletter to come to your email address, sign up for the MHTG -NEWS Listserv: <<http://listserv.wa.gov/archives/mhtg-news.html>>